

## FRENCH INDO-CHINA

for evacuation of the Mekong's left bank and indemnity for Siamese aggression. Siam found to her sorrow that too much faith had been placed in English backing and France's indifference and preoccupation with Tonkin. If in carrying out the evacuation clause Siam forced wholesale deportations of the Laotians to her territory it was the final manifestation of her *drang nach Osten*.

Almost at the same time complications with England began to develop over her encroachments in the Shan States.<sup>1</sup> A commission was named in 1894 to study the problem, and Pavie headed the French delegation. Its work proved to be too slow for the English, who hastened matters by raising their flag at Muong Sing, despite Pavie's protests. New discussions and surveys resulted in another move on the part of the English, who this time occupied Tong-Muong-Sing, France seemed hopelessly weak and vacillating by contrast with England's strong action. While Pavie was engaged in this struggle Commandant Fournier was working on the South Chinese frontier, between the Black River and the Mekong. The treaty of Shimonoseki hastened the prompt solution of these frontier problems by an agreement that was favourable to the French and hostile to the British. This influenced the agreement signed between these two powers in May 1896, in which they renounced mutually aggression against Siam. England abandoned Muong Siang to France, thus giving the latter control of all the left bank of the Mekong from Yunnan to the Cambodian frontier.

Though, the year 1893 marked the nominal occupation of Laos, it was not three years later that the country was organized administratively as Upper and Lower Laos. This division remained purely theoretical it was modified in 1899, when both sections were united under a

Resident Superior and a single budget. The local  
 organization  
 was left as it found, only the upper stratum of  
 offices was changed.  
 la the French were inspired by their Siamese  
 predecessors, who  
 native institutions, and also by budgetary  
 considerations\*  
 Thirteen French Commissars, aided by native officials and  
 the inevitable<sup>1</sup>  
 loterp refers, exercised all powers with a tranquil  
 disregard of Homes\*  
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